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A NOTE ON SINN FEIN IN IRELAND.

BY T. M. KETTLE, M.P.

THERE are certain misinterpretations of large events to correct which it would be necessary to call up in review the entire history of the world; no briefer prologue seems capable of restoring proportion and perspective. One felt this, with unpleasant acuteness, on reading Mr. Seumas MacManus's account of Sinn Fein in a recent issue of this REVIEW.* The impression which he gave of the Irish situation is so remote from pedestrian reality, so untrue in both line and atmosphere, and so thoroughly misleading that some attempt should be made to correct it. It must be understood in advance that I write as a member of the Irish Parliamentary Party. This body, according to Mr. McManus, has spent the thirty-five years of its existence in "committing a great crime against the Irish nation." During that time, it has not "wrung from Britain as much of a concession as would pay deck-fare between Kingstown and Holyhead." And at this moment it is "rapidly dissolving" under the criticism of "young Ireland." Further, it is much to be feared that the moral aspirations of Parliamentarianism are of a somewhat more subdued character than those which burn in the breast of Mr. MacManus. The rose-flush of innocence and idealism in his thought—and this is a general trait of literary Sinn Fein—reminds one of nothing so much as that affinity of Goethe's who "carried her nose with as divine a tilt as if there never had been a sin committed in the world." We, Parliamentarians, lay no claim to virtue of that pure radiance. We have the pretension to be realists. We conduct ourselves like men of this world; accept the limitations of our work; recognize the sense in which it is

* "Sinn Fein: Its Genesis and Purpose." By Seumas MacManus. NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, August 16, 1907.

true that life begins only where politics ends; in short, we do our unhaloed best with the thing closest to hand. This difference of mental coloring is ingrained, and it will be found to explain many other differences. It is, indeed, the main burden of this "Note." But, before proceeding to details, some apology must be made for the polemical character of the pages that follow. A simple, positive statement would be far more pleasant, but Mr. MacManus has made that impossible. He has, as I hope to show, made his case for Sinn Fein by stealing on its behalf the achievements of every movement in modern Ireland and simply clapping his label on their goods. From our Parliamentary movement he has stolen with both hands. But there is this difference—that, in every other case, he praises while he steals, in ours alone he derides, denounces and misrepresents.

The Sinn Fein movement is a rare example of the weakness of language and the strength of literature. An inspired ambiguity of phrase, an apostolate of plagiarism, and the party was in being! "Sinn Fein," as Mr. McManus says, is the Irish for "Ourselves." In its propagandist use, it simply means "Rely on yourself alone." Now that is an appeal which contains within itself the whole of practical morals. Politics, however, is a matter not of abstract ideas but of concrete proposals. Sinn Fein as a phrase stands for a sound, if not very startling, principle of morals: Sinn Fein as a party in Ireland stands for the proposal to withdraw the Irish Members from Westminster.

The trick has been to suggest that all the recommendations derived from one sense of the words apply to the other. One cannot ask for a better illustration of this than Mr. MacManus's article. Ignoring the lines of division and departmentalization drawn in clear ink over our psychological map, he claims for his little party all modern Ireland, from the ballads to the bacon-factories. Shakespeare could not have "conveyed" with a lordlier hand; nor that Frenchman who said, "Whenever I find an idea of mine in another man's book I simply take it." The Sinn Fein Party, according to his testimony, invented the language-revival. They invented Fenianism. They invented temperance. They invented Sir Horace Plunkett and the co-operative movement. They invented Mr. T. P. Gill and the Department of Agriculture; Catholic Emancipation; forestry; idealism; anti-emigration; the Land Act of 1881, and a whole

Whitmanesque catalogue of other things. They are "regenerating Ireland not only politically, but also linguistically, industrially, educationally, morally and socially." In all this adverbial advance, the part of the Irish Parliamentary Party has been either hostility or barrenness. And the whole of the new generation, comprising the supporters of all these movements, are in favor of withdrawing the Irish Members of Parliament from Westminster. Such is the testimony of Mr. MacManus. If it were true it would be quite unanswerable, the mind being left merely to speculate on the dark perversity by which the Irish Party contrives to get itself elected. A party returned without opposition, in a country in which it has no supporters, is surely a phenomenon of a hitherto unclassified kind. Miracles of this order do not happen. In point of fact, the testimony is not true, nor reasonably near the truth. Without the least imputation on Mr. MacManus's candor, I am forced to say roundly that, all through his account, he is simply paying himself with words, and trafficking in *double entendre*. Sinn Fein, as a moral principle, may legitimately gather into its net, not merely everything now being well performed in Ireland, but every respectable achievement in the whole fabric of civilization; Sinn Fein, as a political movement, is represented by a loosely organized group, not yet numerous enough to be reckoned as even a section of Nationalist opinion. A few facts as to the verifiable strength of the group will be sufficient to establish this. The "National Council" was formed in the autumn of 1905. Mr. MacManus represents it as a synthesis of all progressive movements then going forward in Ireland, and suggests quite openly that the most eminent men in each of these movements are associated with the "Council." Nothing could be more absurd. Neither Dr. Douglas Hyde nor any of his lieutenants in the Gaelic League has any connection with the Sinn Fein group. On the other hand, their relations with the Irish Party are most friendly; we accept and press home their programme in the matter of Irish teaching in the primary schools, and their pressure combined with ours has, within the last few months, achieved a moderate success in the restoration of certain grants which had been withdrawn. There is hardly a single one of the younger Members of Parliament who is not a member of the Gaelic League: certain of them, such as Mr. Stephen Gwynn and Mr. Boland, are con-

spicuous workers in it. Any attempt to stampede the Gaelic League into the Sinn Fein camp would be so obviously insane that not even Mr. MacManus has ever proposed it. The industrial movement in its latest wave owes perhaps more to the "Leader" than to any other agency. This paper, with all its blindnesses and bludgeonings, has certainly in this regard "made good." But the "Leader" is so far from supporting Sinn Fein that it pours out on it a weekly torrent of derision. The "Irish Industrial Association," inaugurated by Mr. E. J. Riordan of Cork, is the focus of the campaign on this programme. Mr. Riordan is not a Sinn Feiner; the association is non-political; and its conferences are attended, not merely by Nationalist, but by some Unionist, Members of Parliament. The coöperative movement, in so far as, through the bland impertinences of some of its promoters, it gets any political color, inclines much more to philanthropic Toryism than to revolutionary Nationalism. In short, of all the currents of effort alleged by Mr. MacManus to have come to their confluence in the "National Council," there is not one that is not now flowing in its separate channel.

The real history of the Sinn Fein group is very different. It has been created out of the will and mind of one man, Mr. Arthur Griffith, whose strength is only less conspicuous than his narrowness. Mr. Griffith began some ten years ago as the leader of the "physical force" remnant. Whether that word "remnant" has anything of the saving Arnoldian sense I do not care to say: but Parliamentary Nationalists have always regarded them as the keepers of an ideal, the priests of a mystery, the guardians of a temple that must be conserved. Sovereign independence for Ireland, undoubtedly, makes an appeal to the imagination which is not made by Home Rule. The right of a nation to seek freedom by force of arms must be asserted, though there be no opportunity of putting it into action. Such is the inspiration behind the extremist ideal; no Irishman has ever refused his respect to it; and for that and other reasons there existed a relation of friendliness and tolerance between Mr. Griffith's group and us until the General Election of 1900. Then there was a misunderstanding. It grew less and less bridgable; and in a little while Mr. Griffith found himself committed to bitter hostility to the Parliamentary Party. He groped about for three or four years in a purely negative fashion. Parliamentaryism he had discovered

to be not only barren, but a compromise of the national dignity; but physical force was so obviously impossible that a party could not be founded upon it. You can shake off an old love in politics only by substituting a new one, and no one can work up a passion for a vacuum. Things went slackly until in 1904 he came upon Hungary, and found that the abstention of the delegates from the Imperial Council under Deak had been one of the best weapons in the struggle with Austria. Forthwith he issued a pamphlet, fervent and fascinating in tone, moving with the ordered sweep of an epic, in which he narrated the "Resurrection of Hungary" and advised Ireland to do likewise. This, in fact, is the most curious thing about the new policy. The present Sinn Fein programme demands that no idea shall be considered unless it has "originated in Ireland, and is instinct with Irish tradition." That is not the genesis of the proposal to withdraw the Irish representation from Westminster. It sprang out of a study, not of Irish, but of Hungarian, conditions, and was known for the first half of its life as the "Hungarian Policy."

The shrewder could not resist a discreet smile at propagandists who, having repatriated, as they said, the National imagination exiled by us to Westminster, forthwith proceeded to station it at Budapesth. Questions began to be asked. Was the analogy set up between the two countries real or only superficial? The deeper the inquiry was pushed, the worse it became for the "Hungarian Policy." There was another nation in Austria, which, in fighting-weight, social fabric, previous mode of agitation and so forth, seemed to present a much closer resemblance to Ireland, namely, Bohemia. Was it not a fact that Bohemia had withdrawn her Members of Parliament in 1867, found the policy fruitless and sent them back in 1879? There had been a direct army tax in Hungary, and Deak had roused his people by inducing them to strike against it, but how was such a weapon to be found in Ireland? The fiscal machinery devised by English Chancellors was much less easily dislocated, for it was enveloped in a casing of indirect taxation. So went the argument and "Hungarianism" was decidedly languishing, when somebody in a sudden gleam of genius renamed it the "Sinn Fein Policy." The simple phrase was worth ten years of organizing effort. It was a speech in itself, and a speech all the more valuable for propagandist purposes because it was soaked in fallacy. The Na-

tional Council was formed. Heresy is always more original in its utterance than orthodoxy. It is also more fervent and fertile in argument; and, thanks to these qualities, Sinn Fein is now definitely established as a subject to be talked about. The change, says Mr. MacManus, was wrought in "grim silence"; and, did one not know him to be a humorist, one could not but laugh. If there is one thing on which we are all agreed, it is the polemical fluency of Sinn Fein. It expounds itself in countless articles and letters not merely in the Irish but in the foreign press, and the only matter in dispute is whether it talks to the point or away from it.

That, then, is the actual genesis of Sinn Fein. As for its present strength, the following facts will help to an estimate. The last Annual Convention of the National Council was held in a small room over a jeweller's shop. It gathers a handful here and there in the provincial towns; whereas, at the great Home Rule Meetings, now being held throughout Ireland, the whole countryside attends, the numbers sometimes running up as high as twenty thousand. But, of course, the real test is the polling-booth. Sinn Fein has never as much as put a candidate in nomination for a Parliamentary constituency, to give the people the opportunity of saying, through the ballot-box, whether they want Members of Parliament or not, or, if they do, whether they want them to work at Westminster. There are some eighty constituencies in Ireland with a safe Nationalist majority, but to not a single one of them has the new policy been submitted. The General Election of 1906 afforded ample opportunity, and since that date there have been several bye-elections. In Kilkenny the sitting member resigned, declaring himself an adherent of Sinn Fein, but he did not contest the seat; and in this, as in every other case, a pledge-bound supporter of the Parliamentary Party was elected. There is but one Sinn Fein Member of Parliament, Mr. C. J. Dolan. Mr. Dolan was elected as a Parliamentarian, but changed over on the introduction of the Irish Council bill. He was called on by resolution of the Party, to which he had pledged himself, to submit his new departure to his constituents; he has so far failed to do this. Then there is the strange case of Sir Thomas Esmonde in Wexford. But the whole situation is summarized in a recent letter from Mr. John E. Redmond to the Waterford Corporation:

"In Kilkenny and in Wicklow Sinn Fein was not heard of in the recent elections. In South Longford . . . Sinn Fein won't show its face. In Leitrim, in open defiance of the Party Pledge, Sinn Fein in the person of Mr. Dolan has run away from the poll; and in North Wexford the only clear and definite thing which stands out from the strange and perplexing situation is that, if Sir Thomas Esmonde is a Sinn Feiner, which I take leave to doubt, he is quite determined not to submit that issue to the people of Wexford, who, it is manifest, are unanimously opposed to it, as is natural in a community noted as much for its sense as its courage."

There is, it should be said, a Sinn Fein group of eight or nine in the Dublin Corporation, and a member of a District Council here and there, elected for the most part on questions of local and not of National policy. And that is the total achievement of a party which, according to Mr. MacManus, "includes probably three-fourths of the national thinkers of Ireland." A party that conducts its campaign on paper is not likely to touch or trouble our imagination. You push the policy of withdrawal too far when you withdraw not merely from Westminster but also from the ballot-boxes of Ireland.

As to the merits of the Sinn Fein proposal something must, naturally, be said. Generally, it seems to us that the Parliamentary Party stands for realism in politics, and these assailants for idealism. Representative institutions in any country are full of makeshifts and imperfections. Criticism has grown merry or passionate at their expense, but humanity on the whole accepts the second-best. The Sinn Fein apostle would shudder at such company; but, when he declaims against the costliness, the lack of results, the low intellectual plane of our constitutional "machine," he comes closer to the theorists of Anarchism than he would care to know. In the course of a discussion, it was asked who were the Sinn Fein leaders, and the reply came that it was essentially a movement without leaders. A certain temperament enlisted on our side feels very acutely this atmosphere of disintegration. Some of us fear that Sinn Fein is less a revolt against English rule, than a revolt against the limitation of life in general. What man of average experience will lend himself to the delusion, fat already with so much blood of sacrifice, that Utopia can be brought down into the streets by a simple change of political tactics? But these are, perhaps, mere "metaphysical" considerations. Coming down to the strictly political plane, people

ask: What is the aim of Sinn Fein? The ideal of all Irish Nationalists is in essence the same, an autonomous Ireland. It is only when we come to the form in which that ideal is to be expressed, or the methods by which it is to be attained, that differences begin. Now, Home Rule is, as a form, a clear idea understood by all the world. What is the political form aimed at in contrast by Sinn Fein? The answer is Babel. An independent Republic; an independent Monarchy; an Austro-Hungarian Union; Grattan's Parliament, and a whole medley of vaguer notions. One is driven to think that the Dublin lady who, mistaking the Irish for French, called it the "*Sans Fin*" policy, the policy without end, spoke with a wisdom deeper than her own. Then, as to its methods: what is difficult to discover is any reality at all behind any of its little patents. I have shown how it runs away from the opportunity of putting its leading scheme of abstention from Westminster to the practical test of the ballot-box. Let us glance at some of its other plans. It derides us for not preventing the over-taxation of Ireland; but none of its supporters has, by refusal to pay taxes, succeeded in reducing the revenue of England by a bare penny. When a group of Parliamentarians, who are organizing for next year a strike against Income Tax, invited the help of Sinn Fein, Mr. John Sweetman, a grazier-capitalist who stands high in their councils, replied that, if he refused to pay the tax, the sheriff would sell his furniture. Revolutionary passion, mitigated by attachment to one's furniture, is not likely to cause England much loss of sleep. A cynical observer could push this contrast between programme and action to the last limit of ridicule. Mr. MacManus is against enlisting, and quite laudably; but no prominent man of his party has made a public campaign against it in Ireland and taken the consequences. The law courts are to be abandoned; but the two most interesting cases we have had for some years had Mr. Griffith and Mr. Edward Martyn, President of the National Council, as their leading figures. Mr. Martyn, who is a bought-out landlord, brought his action to recover membership in the Kildare Street Club, the most exclusive rendezvous of land-owning Unionism and partisan lawyerdom in the country. Sinn Fein desires to withdraw the party from Parliament in order to purge their policy of the Westminster taint; at the same time, Sinn Fein Justices of the Peace, so created under Westminster laws, sit in session to ad-

minister laws made at Westminster. Sinn Fein Aldermen and Councillors get themselves elected to bodies that would have no existence but for Acts made in London, and made, moreover, through the agency of the Irish Parliamentary Party. And so on. It must not be thought that the average Irishman regards all this with any sort of derision. He rather shrugs his shoulders, and allows himself a salt smile, perceiving that Sinn Fein is hungering after a purity which the nature of things does not permit. For his part, he is a man of many compromises; and he recognizes that, even if the purification be in every other respect complete, Sinn Fein will undergo corruption once more when it sticks on its letter a stamp with the superscription of an English king.

Unhappy as Sinn Fein is in its positive proposals, it is no happier in its criticism. The Irish Party is condemned on the ground both of principle and of results. We compromise the national dignity, it seems, and join in waiving the right to a free Parliament by attending at Westminster. The ample answer to that complaint is that Parnell went to Westminster, and what was good enough for Parnell is good enough for us. When that answer is made before an Irish audience, it brings the argument to an abrupt end. But our agitation, says Mr. MacManus, costs the country too much in proportion to results. The amount is, according to him, about £25,000 a year; it is, in fact, closer to £20,000. With this sum a "party-machine" of approximately eighty members and constituencies has to be kept in being. With us a Member of Parliament receives no salary, no travelling allowance, not even free postage for his official correspondence. At the annual fixing of the register of votes, it is necessary to maintain in every contested constituency a staff of agents to look after National interests. At election-times not a single penny of the cost is borne by the State; the candidates or their parties pay the entire expenses, not merely of their own campaigns, but of the official machinery of the election. Not even the lead-pencil with which the voter marks his ballot is bought by the State. During session, attendance in London at all important divisions is indispensable. Some of us manage this by living in a state of perpetual motion between Kingstown and Holyhead; others by settling in London lodgings for six or seven months of the year. To cover these expenses, in part, a grant of twenty pounds a

month is made during session. For the rest of the year, no allowance of any kind is paid. In regard to an accepted calumny, it should be added that there is not a single "professional agitator" in the Irish Party. In other words, there is not a single man in it who lives by politics. The picture is incomplete without a further touch. A Party that has no rich man has on the other hand never been even faintly soiled with corruption. We have sought no places and given no bought votes. Mr. Redmond wrote the other day:

"The Party is made up of men who are far less amenable to British influences and far more independent of British parties than many of their critics—men who, while many of their opponents are seeking place and office for themselves or their friends, have never asked the favor of even a postmastership from this or any other Government—as I can say for myself after nearly twenty-seven years in Parliament."

To maintain the machinery of this Party, we spend annually a sum, approximately, equal to the salary of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. It represents a contribution per head of our population of about a penny a year. On the credit side, somebody has been amusing himself lately by estimating the sum total of grants, loans and reductions of rent obtained by our agitation; he fixes the figure at £200,000,000. The penny a head seems on the whole to have been well invested.

But this is not the way things strike people in Ireland. Men, after all, do not think in statistics. It is the visible drama of events, the changed setting of their lives, that impresses them. The Parliamentary Party, says Sinn Fein, has done nothing; and the man of the Irish countryside stands aghast at so much ignorance combined with so much ingratitude. Sinn Fein is at best a *gamin* of the cities; but *he* has lived through the land war and carries in his mind the historical sense and perspective of which Sinn Fein is devoid. He has seen the entire fabric of rural society taken to pieces, and remade under the inspiration of ideas of which thirty years ago the boldest did not dare even to dream. The finance of the Land Acts is bad, admittedly, and atrociously bad; but what does he know about that? What he does know is that, before Mr. Parnell came, he was the chattel of his landlord; he stood three hours in the rain waiting on the agent's good pleasure to accept his rent; if he refused to take his hat off to this or that hanger-on of the "big house," he was liable to evic-

tion. To-day, over one-third of Ireland there is no such thing as Landlordism. Where it does exist, it is melting like snow in spring. The feudal serf of a generation ago is the freehold owner of to-day. He has forgotten how to take off his hat. "There is no longer," said an old man the other day, "the great fear on the people." That is how the Irish countryside feels as to the outcome of the Land War, and when Sinn Fein tells them that it is all nothing, the men who saw the beginning and are now seeing the end gasp in amazement. And there is much more than that. The laborers have not been passed over. The Act introduced under Mr. Parnell in 1882 and its successors have created mechanism under which already more than 20,000 rural laborers—in a few years the figure will be about 35,000—have left their old-time hovels and come with their families into neat and solid cottages, with allotments of lands attached. County Government, which a generation ago was the obedient hound-dog of Landlordism, is now in the hands of Councils, elected on a widely democratic basis. The new spirit has found its way everywhere like a fresh wind blowing through frowzy streets. And Sinn Fein says it is all nothing!

This is something like an outline of the shape which discussion has taken in Ireland. One can but hope that its details have not wearied the patience of readers who have been kind enough to follow them.

It is pleasant to pass out of the region of polemics and end with a positive word. Nothing that has been said must be interpreted as meaning that the function of the Parliamentary Party in the national life to-day is precisely what it was thirty years ago. That could only be if Ireland were separated from the common and desirable destiny of mankind, which is to grow, and in growing to change. In describing the process one falls back on the comfortable word "evolution." It has gone forward in a minute obedience to Herbert Spencer's formula; it has been a movement from "an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity," with suitable accompanying changes. The Irish Party of Mr. Parnell was both wider and narrower than that of Mr. Redmond. It was wider inasmuch as it was the sole national focus of the time, and contained in germ almost every talent and idea that has since come to maturity in Ireland. It was narrower in so far as, having given its whole

rich soul to the political movement, it was less keenly aware than we are of the limitations of politics. This is the root of almost every criticism which has since been passed upon it. With that deplorable absence of the historical sense already noticed, a certain group denounces Mr. Parnell's party, because it did the work of its own generation and not that of the next. It failed to create the Gaelic League twenty years before the time of the Gaelic League had come. That must certainly be admitted; but does the censure go home? After all, narrowness is the beginning of wisdom. "*Omnis determinatio est negatio*," said Spinoza; and a table only succeeds in being a table by declining to be a chair. Had Mr. Parnell's Party not concentrated their strength upon the land and upon the purely political question, they would have simply floundered about in a sea of noble aspirations without reaching any shore. As it was, they laid the foundation of the new Ireland. Everything dates back to their work as to the beginning of a period. The architectural metaphor is, however, too dead to be of any use; and it is ludicrous to say, as Mr. MacManus says, that the "new movement has risen upon the ruins of the so-called Parliamentary movement." One must take an image from living things. The development of Ireland has been like the growth of a great oak. There are more branches now and a mightier shade, but there has been no discontinuity. The warmth of each summer has added its special ring to the trunk; but who planted the acorn? Mr. MacManus and his friends are much too fond of the catastrophic and sensational type of change. What reality presents in Ireland, as in most other countries, is a continual, slight dissolution and reintegration. The large but vague unity of Mr. Parnell's day has given place to what may be called a departmentalization of national effort. You have four or five organizations to-day of national scope, where you had but one twenty years ago. Dr. Douglas Hyde has had an opportunity of explaining in America the origin and aims of the greatest of the new activities—and there are many others,—the Gaelic League. All that has had its lesson, and most of us have learned it. Life is more complex than we once thought it. The nation is vaster than any man or movement. We are all enrolled in different regiments of the same army of civilization, and the duty of each is simply to stick to his colors and to keep marching. There is no such thing

as finality of achievement. The question of land tenure having been settled, or partly settled, there stirred into life at once the two problems it had contained as in a shell, the distribution and the use of the land. In addition to non-Governmental agencies working on these matters, there are at present functioning in Ireland three official bodies, the Estates Commissioners, the Congested Districts' Board and the Agricultural Department. These bodies are not perfect in all respects and they have come frequently under the criticism of the Irish Party, but largely under pressure of that criticism these Land Departments have now been fairly assimilated into the national system; and while the two which are occupied with the transfer of land will necessarily bring their own careers to an end by accomplishing their work, the third, the department of agricultural and technical education and economic development, will become, beyond all doubt, the most important arm of progressive administration in a self-governing Ireland. One of the very first acts of a Home Rule Parliament would be to increase enormously both its powers and its resources.

The industrial revival will go forward with rising vigor. Its future depends not, as Mr. MacManus suggests, on the foundation of Sinn Fein or any other Committee, but upon the gradual production of pioneers and *entrepreneurs* by our technical schools. In this widening stream of energy, the Irish Party has its perfectly definite place. Politics is not life, but without politics there is no abundance of life. It is the function of politics not to produce wealth, but to provide such conditions as will liberate the creative powers of the nation, and thereby ensure the production of wealth. It is the duty of a Member of Parliament not to teach the children—he would do it very badly—but to arrange the laws so that they shall be rightly taught by specialized talent. The Irish Party will continue, not weakened but distinctly strengthened by the new currents of thought. The Home Rule idea is like Thebes of the Hundred Gates. Begin where you will in Ireland—land, education, industries—seek to organize advance, and your feet are led inevitably to Home Rule. You can no more have sound nerves with a sick brain than you can have culture and prosperity without the legislative master-ship of your own household. Nothing can be done in the proper way, but above all in the proper spirit, while there is a meddle-

some stranger in the house. That is why Home Rule is going to win. And it does not appear to me that Sinn Fein, in so far as it is in contradiction with present-day Parliamentaryism, will ever succeed in being anything more than a jibe and a reminiscence.

It cannot be too earnestly insisted on that this proposal marks the sole difference of programme between the extreme right and the extreme left wings of Irish Nationalism. Superficial and, it may be, stormy discussions must not be allowed to conceal the fundamental identity of belief and effort. In the struggle for an autonomous Irish Government, Nationalist Ireland displays a firm and even a passionate unity. It is only when one passes to minor questions as to the form in which this ideal is to be embodied, and the tactics by which it is to be won, that any division of opinion appears. So much for the circle of strict politics. But if we cross that, and view the life of the country as a whole, we find that everywhere the fresher minds are being gathered into the sweep of a still wider unity. Ulster is undergoing a rapid revolution. This may be characterized in brief as the Coming of Democracy. The Orange worker is confessedly beginning to fraternize with the Catholic worker, and in their discussion of the future history of labor they are learning to forget the past history of bigotry. Mr. Lindsay Crawford, the leader of this new development in Orange Ulster, is to-day President of the new Independent Orange Order and one of the greatest personal influences in the country. Everywhere there is growing in Ireland a passion for social peace, for prosperity and culture. The great obstacle to the realization of this desire being experimentally discovered to be Dublin Castle, Orange Ulster is growing more impatient of English control and more tolerant of the political programme of its Nationalist fellow countrymen. The South is beginning to understand that the line of prejudice which divides it from the North must be swept away. The North is beginning to understand, for its part, that there is a broad line of national interest separating all Ireland from England, which can in no circumstances be swept away. Decidedly, the word of the hour in Ireland is not Dissension but Unity; and it would be unpardonable if anything that either Mr. MacManus or myself has written should tend to create an opposite impression.

T. M. KETTLE.